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SB 201

February 8, 2007

Senator Kim Gillan
Chair, Senate Local Government Committee
Montana Legislature

Dear Senator Gillan:

In my years of experience as a land use planner working with cities and counties in Montana, I have continually seen them struggle to manage growth together, though their growth policies without exception call for coordinated planning between them. Local decision makers commonly express to me their frustration at falling short of this goal, despite the implications: inefficient use of costly infrastructure, ad hoc review of subdivision proposals, unclear development standards, and unpredictable future growth patterns. I strongly believe that State support for good planning is urgently needed, and that Senate Bill 201 is the appropriate approach.

Those Montana communities in which I work will continue to grow, and that growth offers opportunities for creating great neighborhoods, jobs, and commerce. As they grow, however, they need the planning tools that the State can provide in order to protect their core assets of clean water, open spaces, and fiscally responsible government. SB 201 would do this by offering incentives for creating sensible, fair, and transparent community planning.

It is absolutely clear to me that through SB 201, the State will provide city and county governments, developers, landowners, and homeowners much better tools to effectively plan for the future. By creating a clear process by which they identify areas that make the most sense for growth, cooperatively plan for future infrastructure needs, and adopt fair development standards, communities can shape the future they want, rather than letting the future shape them. This bill would do that. I urge you to support SB 201

Sincerely,

Randy Carpenter
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